

From May 2025 (Volume 189)





May 2025

We have been enjoying some beautiful hot weather and despite a full calendar we have had time to just sit in the garden and actually relax with our books. Sounds ordinary, but it seems quite rare for us to actually sit back with no plans and just chill out.

Tammy is, likewise, busy at home in her garden, cutting the vast lawn and surprise, surprise, the fruit trees we planted at the back are all growing beautifully.

The Larn is working (from home) again and is really giving it 'her all'. She is doing well after her reversal and coping well with her diet etc.

DP is getting Shindig ready and we are all hoping this bout of great weather will boost ticket sales. It's an expensive exercise and weather dominates potential sales. We are going for one or two of the days.

Peachy just phoned us as she's now back from her travels in South America and full of tales of her great adventure...and wants to return.

Meanwhile Beau is really knuckling down to his dissertations and final law year studies and we are so thrilled that he is so determined. Otterlie is a little unwell but Peachy said she often catches viruses etc as she seems to have a poor natural immune system, so we hope it's nothing serious.

Angela has also just returned from a long break in Portugal and we have to fix a meet asap.

I have decided to give up my allotment in the autumn as it is hard work and a liability and having had it for over ten years, I will miss it. Giving it up seems almost like confirming that I am old and also my tree-planting days are now few and far between as it is really tiring. Yet, Lynn and I run and swim (respectively) every weekday and we enjoy the 5k Park Run ('walk', in my case) every Saturday. The social side is great as we have made lots of new acquaintances there all joining us for coffee afterwards in a local café. Likewise my daily hour-long swim is made so enjoyable by chatting to all the numerous staff and friends I have made there over many years of very early swims.

Lynn has put herself down for extra work and is in a film shoot today at Tobacco Dock (on a boat) so great excitement. She is such a bundle of energy and amazes me with her zeal.

On the world stage we are all amazed how Trump is changing the world scene and I know that his critics will all say "he is an ego maniac only in it for personal gain and fame" but look how he brokered peace and changed many things for the better. Time will tell. That's the good thing about these volumes, one can look back at how we felt at the time.

I think that we need some major changes in this country and the established system is too cumbersome to work now and we are rapidly becoming a third world country. Changes are like omelets because you can't make an omelet without cracking eggs and cracked eggs are required. Excuse the catering analogy.

We are old and despite age not necessarily bringing wisdom it gives us the advantage of 'having seen it all before' and not wanting to repeat mistakes. We see how reliant everyone (including us) is on technology and forgetting (or being unable) to cope without it. Turning back the clock is sometimes required and back to basics just to survive. Easy living is not a virtue and one has to be self-sufficient and able to cope if things change.

Do I sound negative..I hope not. I call it realism and on that note I will end my inward-looking usual rant



As I mentioned earlier, May proved to have some exceptionally hot days and we enjoyed a walk along the Lee Navigation in Hertford with Jose and Cristina



We introduced them to a regular high-light...fish & chips by the river



May 2025, Hertford



River Lee navigation
May '25





Sometimes when we walk , the area is so familiar, we forget how attractive it is



Photo History



Quite a few of us got involved in planting an area outside Southgate Tube where a portacabin had been removed after a long period. There was also an 'Art Trail' where two local ladies explained the significance of their mosaic artworks suspended along the High Street. It was reasonably well attended but I felt this event should have been shouted from the treetops so many more people were aware of this initiative. Anyway it was a very positive action

**journeys
& places**



Southgate Celebration Event

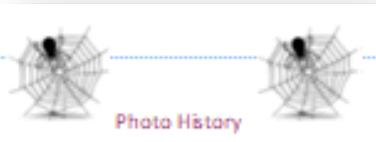
Sunday 11th May, 10.30am – 1.30pm at the green beds beside Southgate Station

Enfield Council has been working on the Southgate Vision Masterplan as well as delivering improvements across the Town Centre to make the everyday experience of people who live, work and visit Southgate more welcoming and vibrant.



Join the Journeys and Places team on Sunday 11th May to learn more about the Southgate Vision Masterplan, help improve the greening of Southgate through participating in some community planting outside Southgate Station and attend the official launch of A Portrait of Southgate Art Trail, comprising of 28 mosaic artworks curated by local residents as part of the Curate Enfield public art programme





10.30am - 11am at the green beds beside Southgate Station **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Join us at the green beds beside Southgate Station for a welcome by Enfield Council and a chance to hear more about A Portrait for Southgate and the Southgate Vision Masterplan.

11am - 11.45am - Artist-led tour of A Portrait for Southgate

Join artists Alex McHallam and Liz Tiranti on a guided walk taking in some of the 28 mosaics that make up the A Portrait of Southgate Art Trail, each inspired by Southgate's unique heritage and vibrant mix of residents.

11am- 1pm - Community Planting

Community planting will take place on the two green beds just outside Southgate Station, led by the Bee Friendly Trust. Tools and equipment will be provided to all who want to take part.

11.45am - 1.30pm - Refreshments and Exhibition

Refreshments, supplied by a local cafe, will be provided at the conclusion of both activities. There will also be a chance to find out more about work being delivered in the Town Centre and chat with the project teams for A Portrait of Southgate and the Southgate Vision Masterplan.



**journeys
& places**



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Photo History



Preparing the planting area



LILY



POPPY



JOHN



DAN



Sometimes one wonders if all our efforts are worthwhile

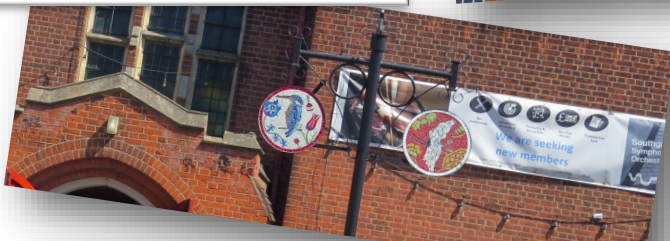


Some of the plants



Lily sewing the wild flower seeds



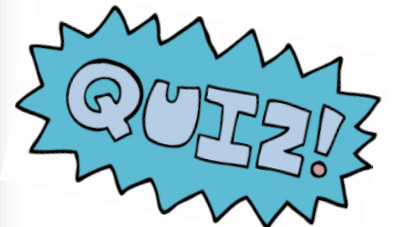


All of the very inspiring mosaics were done by these two ladies and they walked around Southgate explaining their significance





At Bob's house..Every month Bob, Michael Roy and myself alternately host a quiz and snack morning which has become a regular social feature





A country walk with Monique and Martin in beautiful Standon

Despite it being only a short walk Lynn and I succumbed to a carrier-bag-full of goodies from the great bakery there

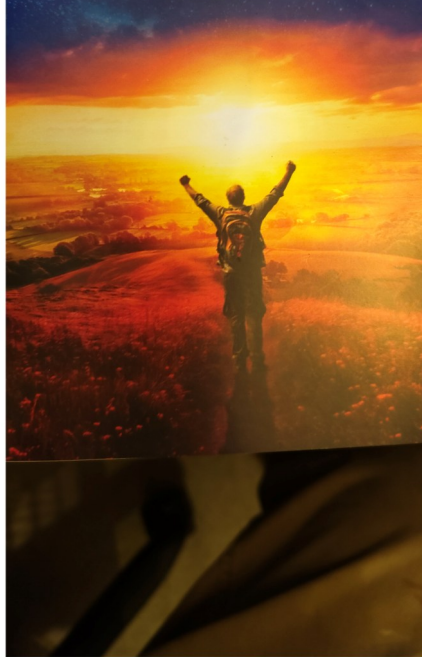




Chichester
festival
theatre

The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry

A new musical
Based on the novel by Rachel Joyce
Book by Rachel Joyce
Music and Lyrics by Passenger



Around the Cathedral in Chichester
which up till now we hadn't realized is
a delightful city

A train ride to Chichester to
see this show. We knew
nothing whatsoever about it
and were totally amazed at
the dancing, singing and
story. It was a wonderful
presentation and we subse-
quently found it was totally
sold out for its entire short
run in the Minerva Theatre





The Crossness Pumping Station celebrated 160 years of pumping sewage from London. This sounds mundane but the incredible engineering and marvelous beam engines were under steam for this day and the whole day was fascinating from start to finish and I was fortunate to be able to get some great atmospheric shots



CROSSNESS PUMPING STATION

CROSSNESS PUMPING STATION

— THE CATHEDRAL ON THE MARSHES —

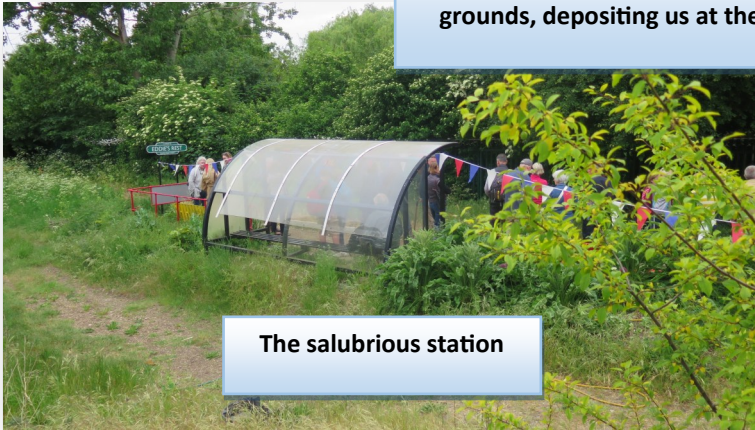


Cyril and Viv joined us for this unique open day and we were met by an old Routemaster bus at Abbey Wood Station





The Routemaster bus dropped us off at a narrow gauge railway run by volunteers, and which slowly took us round the pumping station grounds, depositing us at the main pumping station buildings.



The salubrious station



This was possibly not the first class ride we were promised



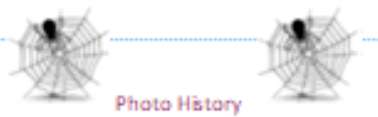


Photo History

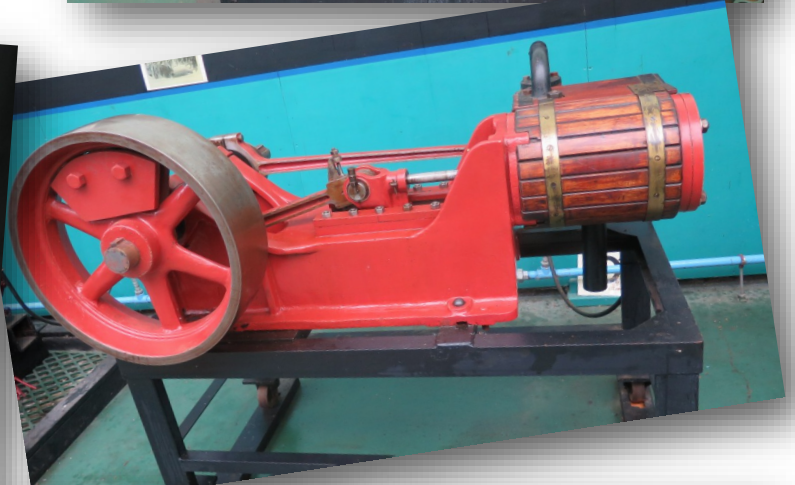
Obviously we had no ideas what these pumps and engines were originally used for but they are totally fascinating and many were actually working



5) The Teapot Waterfall

This Worthington pump was found in the basement of the Octagon in the engine house. It was used to return condensate to the boilers.

Water circulated from the tea-pots

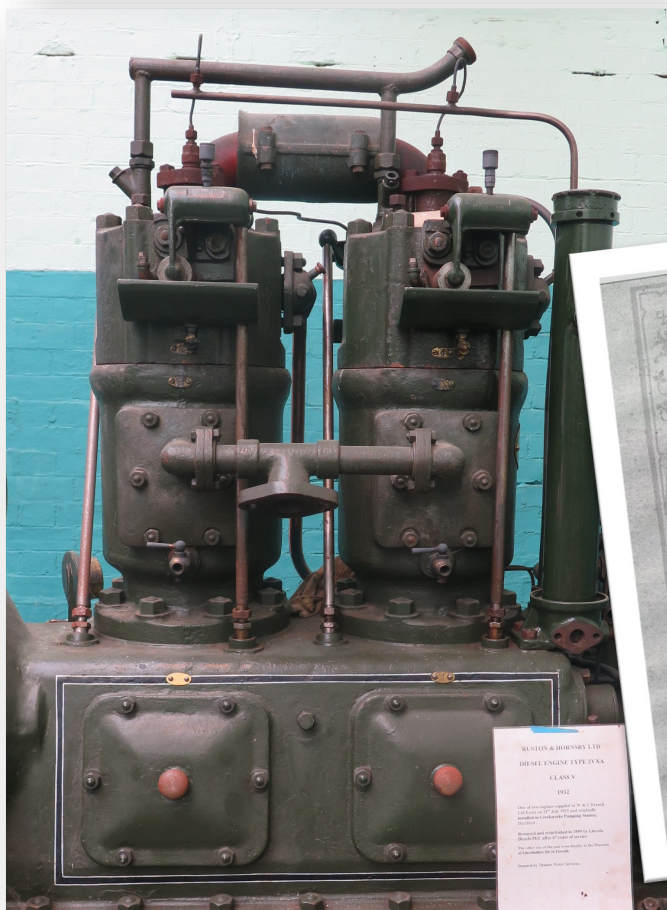


Stuart Turner-Villiers
This pump and engine combination is a common set up and would often be used on farms to fill cattle troughs and general cleaning of farmyards.





It is a great privilege to see these old mechanical engines in situ, lovingly restored and actually working





ICONIC HISTORY

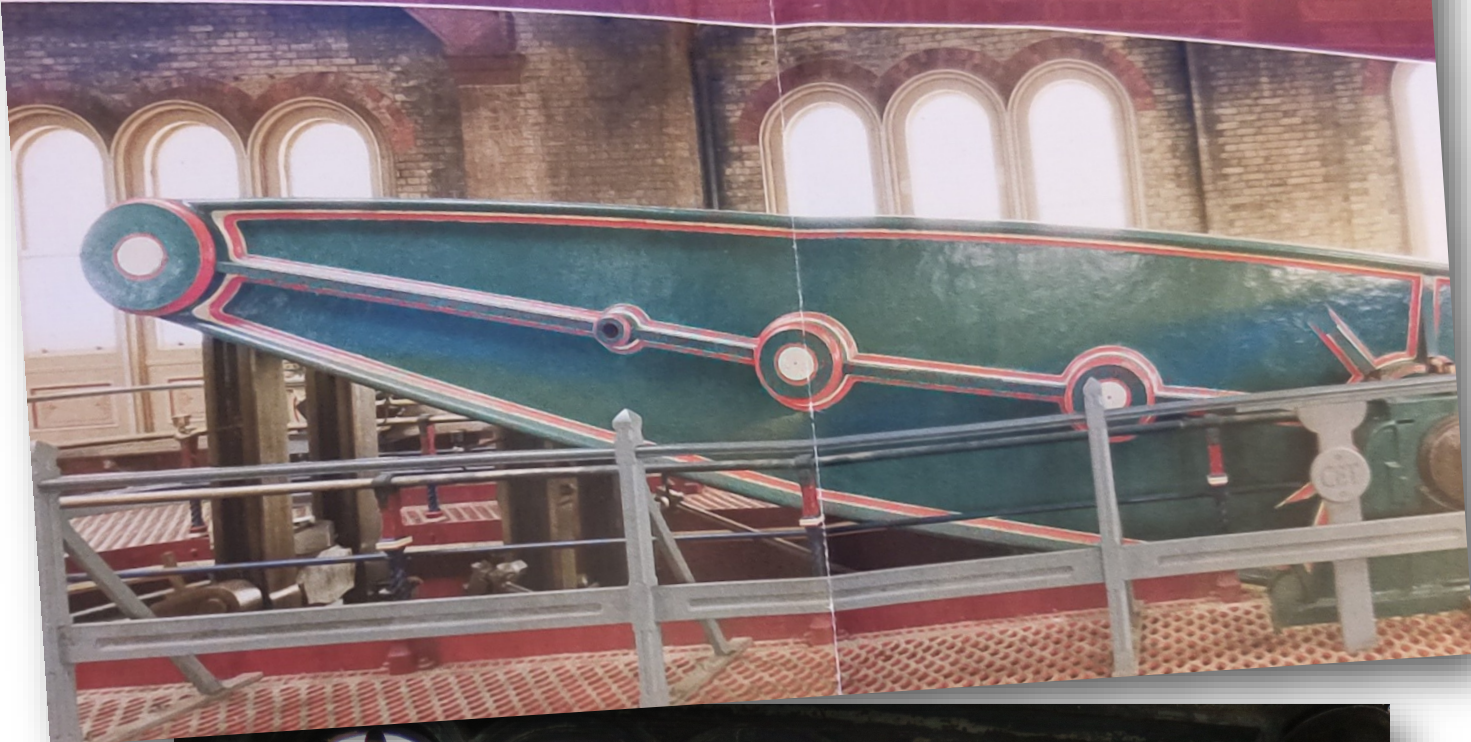
The Crossness Pumping Station was started up in 1865, marking the grand opening of master engineer Joseph Bazalgette's London sewerage system. This cutting-edge infrastructure set new standards for sanitation and helped rid cholera from the capital.

The four gigantic rotative beam engines are the largest in the world today.

Crossness is a masterpiece of 19th century engineering and architecture. It is a monument of Victorian ambition and beauty, which celebrates London becoming the first recognisably modern city in the world.

Crossness was abandoned after 88 years of service pumping London's sewage. Our dedicated volunteers have worked for over 40 years to restore this Grade I listed gem.

Now you can learn about how this once-forgotten place changed the world.



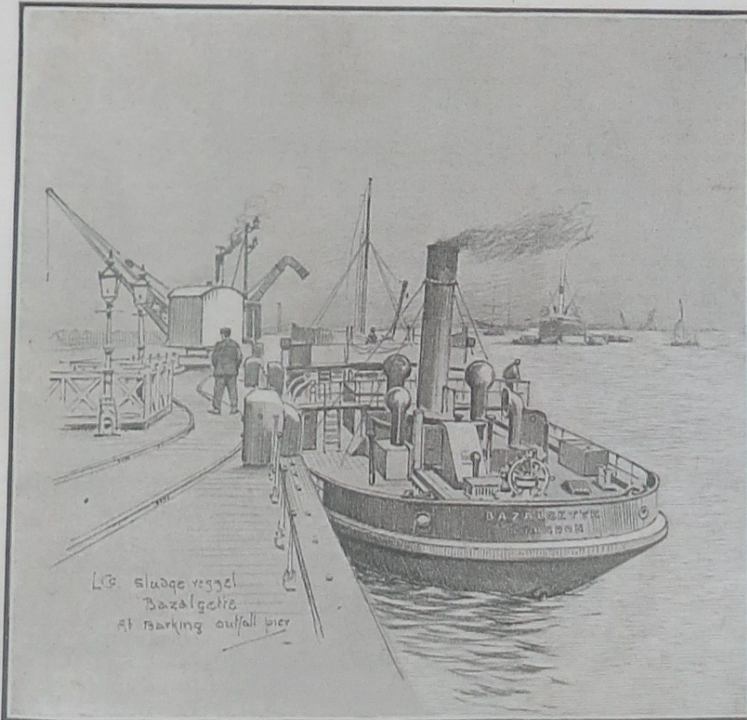




The story of the Pump and Dump boats on the River Thames.

The problem of sewage pollution, in the Thames, was known after the Princess Alice¹ sank in 1878. The dead were later recovered by the Watermen, at 1 shilling per body delivered to the mortuary, and it was found that most of the 640 passengers from the Princess Alice, that that had died, had not drowned but died from ingesting the poisoned waters of the toxic, sludge filled, river.

The Royal commission, in 1882, concluded that it was necessary to create a clean river, by separating the solid waste from the liquid and move the former for disposal at sea and the treated, clean, liquid put back into the Thames. This meant that boats had to be designed and built.



The Sludge Vessel, "Bazalgette," at Barking Outfall Pier

After the Metropolitan Board of Works read the report, it was decided that Joseph Bazalgette, the Chief Engineer to the Board, would be in charge of planning the sludge removal system. This was because the dumping of sludge in the River Thames would have to be suspended for some time.

Specially designed Sludge boats were purchased. In 1887 the first boat arrived, it was named Bazalgette (after Joseph Bazalgette), and started work at once taking the sludge left at Crossness and Beckton to Barrow Deep, 57 miles away. It took 9 or 10 miles to dump one ton of sludge, so they travelled about 110 – 120 miles each trip. Sludge boats operated on the River Thames until 1998. Their task was to remove London waste from

Beckton and Crossness for disposal at sea. The main dumping area was called Barrow Deep and was a black and extremely deep part of the Thames Estuary/North Sea located 15 miles from Foulness. Two hours or so after the dump the water was tested to ensure that the effluent went to the bottom.

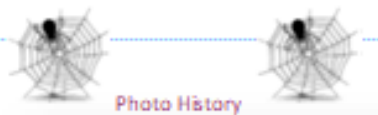
The sewage was treated by adding metal filings and lime mixed to make the sludge thicker and easier to deposit into the sea, where it would disperse easily and quickly. Due to the colour and texture of the mix the Crews gave the boats the nickname of 'Bovril Boats'.

Between 1915 and 1967 they also used an area called "Black Deep" to deposit sludge. This was a little further out into the North Sea.

The last boat "Thames" was built in 1977 and carried 2663 tonnes of sewage on each trip.

In the 1990 European Union legislation regarding the dumping of sewage at sea was passed. Environmentalism was concerned that sewage was contaminating beaches and this led to the phasing out of the fleet. All the sludge boats were scrapped or sold.

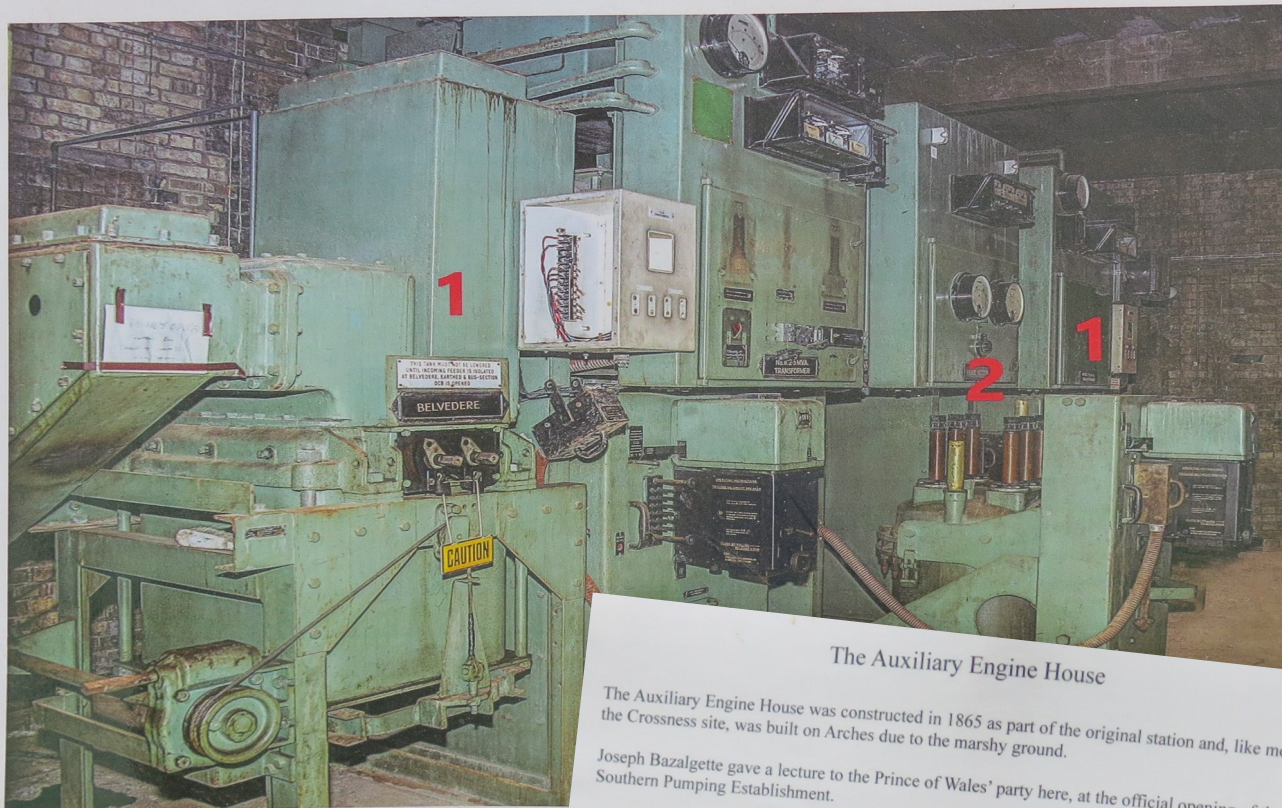
¹There is a Princess Alice memorial in the Old Woolwich Cemetery. The memorial was funded by Public Subscription, and was erected on the mass grave of the unidentified bodies from the disaster. The Master of the Princess Alice, Captain William R. H. Grinstead is buried close by as his body was retrieved from the river.



Crossness Power Supply

The site took power from Belvedere and Barking Power Stations. (The power lines from Barking came through the Barking 'A' Cable Tunnel.)

The power entered via the input busbars. (1) The bus section in the middle (2) is to allow maintenance of the Transformers individually.



The Auxiliary Engine House

The Auxiliary Engine House was constructed in 1865 as part of the original station and, like most of the Crossness site, was built on Arches due to the marshy ground.

Joseph Bazalgette gave a lecture to the Prince of Wales' party here, at the official opening of the Southern Pumping Establishment.

After the opening, part of the Auxiliary Engine House was used as a Carpenters Workshop and another part as a school. The school was for educating the children of the station workers, and local properties, from 1866. In 1890 a London County Council inspection found that the schoolroom was inadequate and a new School was built not far from the Southern Entrance Gates in 1892.

In 1879 two Broad Gauge Railway Engines [Great Western Railway 'Firefly' Class] were converted to Stationary Engines and installed in the Auxiliary Engine House, with four centrifugal pumps, for extra pumping capacity to cope with any stoppage of the main engines or excessive rainfall. By 1892 the boilers of these engines were worn out and were replaced by new Lancashire Boilers. The engines were scrapped altogether in 1903, by the London County Council, who built a new diesel engine powered pumping station.











The sheer scale of this engineering and the beauty of design was outstanding



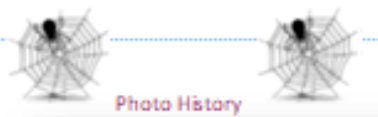
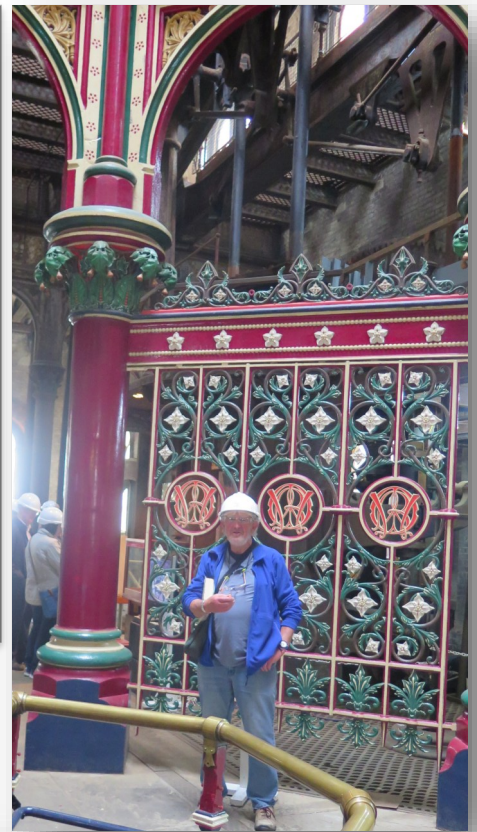
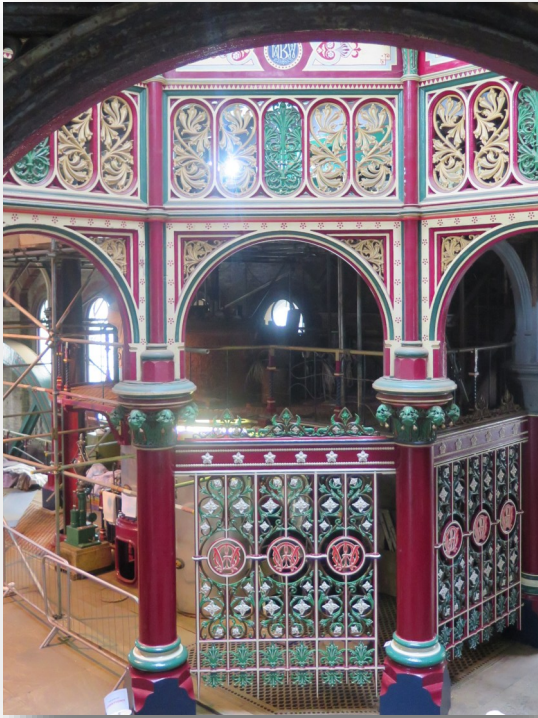


Photo History



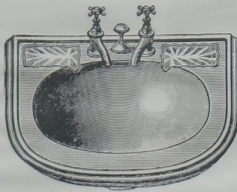
This is the beam of a beam engine that has not been restored





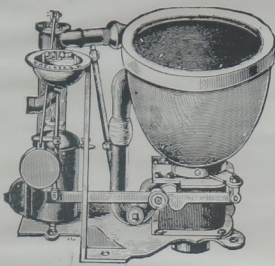
THOMAS CRAPPER & CO.'S

Sanitary Specialities,



IMPROVED LAVATORY BASIN.

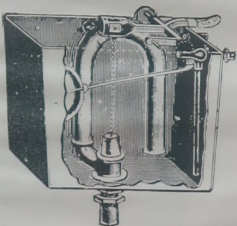
| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|----|----|
| White Ware, fitted with combined Overflow and Waste, and $\frac{1}{2}$ Standard Screw-down Valves ... | 2 | 19 | 6 |
| Plated Fittings, Extra ... | 0 | 8 | 6 |



ELASTIC VALVE CLOSET.

No. 78.—Valve Closet, with white china dish with gold lines, and handle, white ware flushing rim basin, 1 in. supply valve, copper air regulator, complete as shown.

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|----|----|
| If with $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. valve ... | 3 | 9 | 6 |
| Ornamental Basin ... | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| White and Gold Basin ... | 0 | 8 | 9 |
| Box Enamelled inside ... | 0 | 4 | 9 |
| Box fitted with Brass Top ... | 0 | 6 | 3 |
| Box fitted with union to connect Ventilating Pipe ... | 0 | 3 | 9 |
| 4 in. outlet ... | 0 | 7 | 9 |



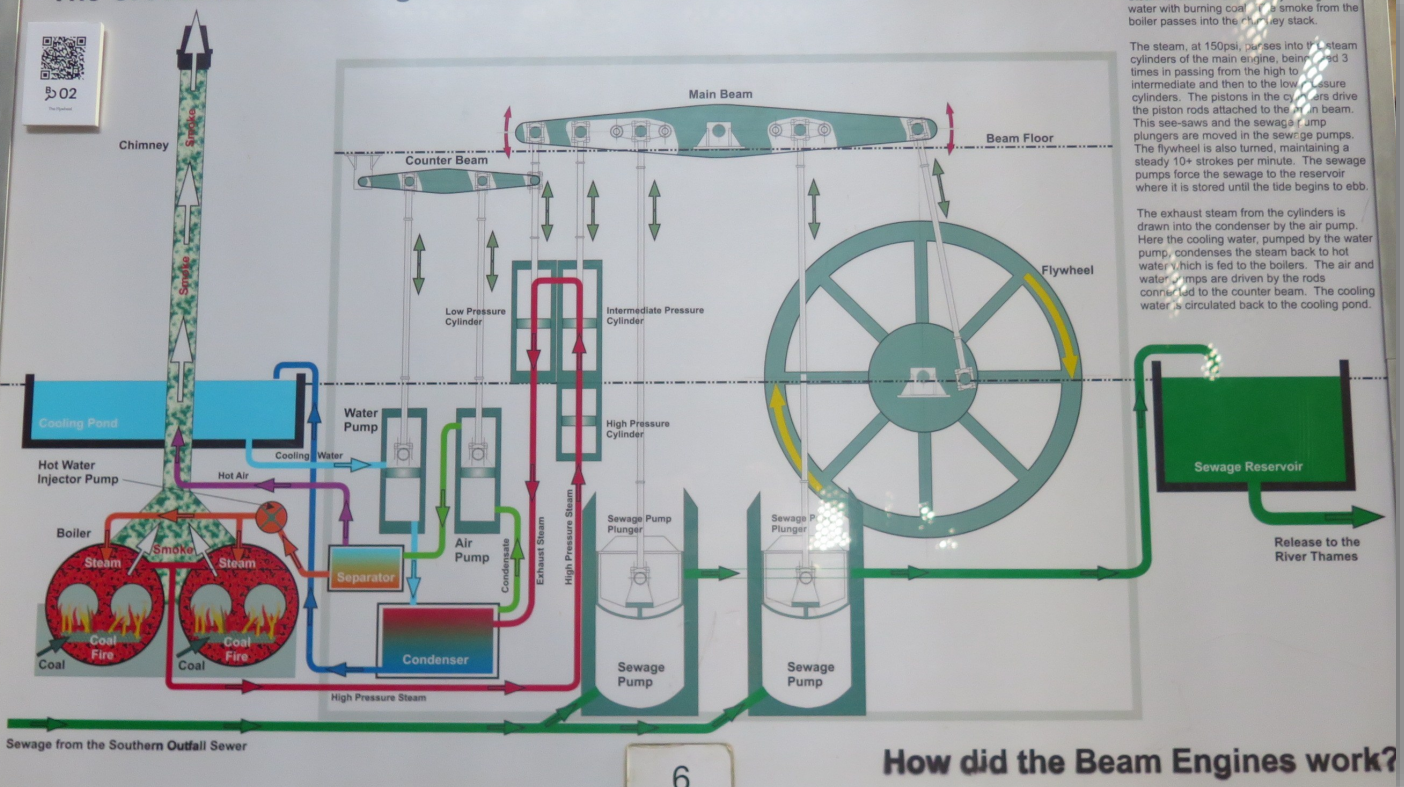
IMPROVED SYPHON Water Waste Preventer.

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|----|----|
| Cast-Iron 2 Gallon SYPHON WASTE PREVENTER, with Tranquil Inlet Valve, and Silencing Air Tubes, and Brass Chain and China Pull ... | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| Ditto, 3 gallon ditto ... | 1 | 3 | 6 |

50, 52, & 54, MARLBOROUGH ROAD, CHELSEA, LONDON, S.W.



The Crossness Beam Engines



How did it work?

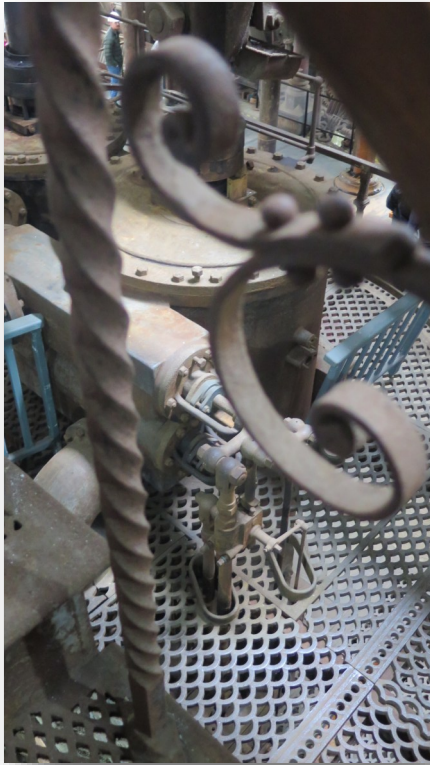
Steam is raised in the boiler by boiling the water with burning coal. The smoke from the boiler passes into the chimney stack.

The steam, at 150psi, passes into the steam cylinders of the main engine, being expanded 3 times in passing from the high to the intermediate and then to the low pressure cylinders. The pistons in the cylinders drive the piston rods attached to the main beam. This see-saws and the sewage pump plungers are moved in the sewage pumps. The flywheel is also turned, maintaining a steady 104 strokes per minute. The sewage pumps force the sewage to the reservoir where it is stored until the tide begins to ebb.

The exhaust steam from the cylinders is drawn into the condenser by the air pump. Here the cooling water, pumped by the water pump, condenses the steam back to hot water, which is fed to the boilers. The air and water pumps are driven by the rods connected to the counter beam. The cooling water is circulated back to the cooling pond.

How did the Beam Engines work?









It's been a few very varied weeks and I guess that is what we both really enjoy...but, I must admit, it can be pretty exhausting

Somehow, when I compile these volumes of My Photo History, I feel very aware that while we are leading a relatively 'normal' life, we are surrounded by so much suffering and terror. Please don't think I am complacent or non-feeling and I honestly hope the world will come to its senses instead of seeming to be both politically and ecologically hell-bent on self destruction. I can see the results and yet am really not able to offer any sensible solutions. When I listen daily to the world news I am shocked and horrified by what I hear but am also very aware that the newsreader changes her tone and follows reporting on these tragic events with a joyful tone used for sports results. Somehow there seems to be two parallel worlds